



Kentucky Department of Agriculture News

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USDA AWARDS GRANT TO KDA TO IDENTIFY NEW MARKETS FOR SHEEP AND GOAT PRODUCTS

FRANKFORT, Ky. — The Kentucky Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with Kentucky State University and the University of Kentucky, has been awarded a matching grant of \$55,780 to identify new niche market opportunities for sheep and goat products.

Direct marketing to Kentucky's ethnic consumers and retailers will be looked at, as well as alternative channels such as local butcher shops and meat processors.

"This grant will help open up new markets for Kentucky sheep and goat producers," Kentucky Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer said, "and allow their numbers to continue to grow in the Commonwealth."

Kentucky is one of the top five states in number of goats with 81,400 as of Jan. 1, according to the Kentucky office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service. Kentucky's sheep inventory totaled 37,000. Sales of Kentucky sheep and goats totaled an estimated \$20 million in 2007.

Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer announced matching grants today provided under the Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program. More than \$1.3 million was awarded to Kentucky and 23 other states and territories to support agricultural market research.

"Farmers are the first important part in the chain of food production," Schafer said, "and these USDA matching grants support new and practical links from farm to market."